

Skepi Creole Dutch

Skepi is an extinct Dutch-based creole language of Guyana, spoken in the region of Essequibo. It was not mutually intelligible with Berbice Creole Dutch, also spoken in Guyana. This language has been classified as extinct since 1998.^[2]

Contents

Description

Sample texts

Fragment from the 1780 letter by Van Vloten

Notes

References

Skepi Dutch Creole	
Region	Guyana
Extinct	by 1998
Language family	Dutch Creole Skepi Dutch Creole
Language codes	
ISO 639-3	skw
Glottolog	skep1238 (http://glottolog.org/resource/language/id/skep1238) ^[1]

Description

By the twentieth century, the existence of a Dutch creole language in the former Essequibo colony was largely forgotten about, and the language only gained the interest of linguists after the Guyanese linguist Ian E. Robertson, who had already brought Berbice Creole Dutch to the attention of the scientific community, also found people on the Essequibo River who remembered a Dutch creole language. In contrast to Berbice Creole Dutch, however, Skepi—which name derives from *Yskepi*, the first Dutch name of the Essequibo River^[3]—was not actively spoken anymore during Robertson's fieldwork. The sample sentences and a Swadesh list compiled by Robertson were thus based on the memories of non-native speakers of the language still spoken by their parents or grandparents.

After Robertson published his material, some older sources emerged. In the memoir of reverend Thomas Youd, who was a missionary in British Guiana, it is asserted that British missionaries learnt Skepi in the 1830s and that they used this language in their church services.^[4] According to this memoir, these missionaries also produced a dictionary of the language,^[5] which since has been lost, however. This is equally the case for a "word list submitted by a German veterinary surgeon."^[6]

In 2013, a letter written by Essequibo planter Wernard van Vloten emerged which contained a small fragment in Skepi Dutch. This letter, which was dated 26 September 1780, is believed to be the oldest source of the Skepi language.^{[7][8]}

Sample texts

Since the language was already extinct when Ian Robertson first investigated the Dutch creoles in Guyana in 1975, much of Skepi is known only through the memory the descendants of native speakers have of the language their forefathers spoke. The following three sample sentences appeared in a Zeelandic newspaper in 1997.^[9]

"Ek we stekkie brot."

Translation: *I want a slice of bread.*

"War ek sa lek em?"

Translation: *Where shall I put it?*

"Em ne ben joe, 'em ben ander domnie."

Translation: *"It was not you, it was that other minister (clergyman)."*

Fragment from the 1780 letter by Van Vloten

"[...] en sok kum kloeke dagka van noom di sitte bi warme lantta, en als um kom weeran bi Bikkelante, Hom sel brengk van die 4 blabba moye goeto."

Translation: *"[...] and try to come one beautiful day to Uncle who lives in a warm country, and when he comes back to the country of the White people, he will bring nice things for the four children."*^{[7][8][10]}

Notes

1. Hammarström, Harald; Forkel, Robert; Haspelmath, Martin, eds. (2017). "Skepi Creole Dutch" (<http://glottolog.org/resource/languoid/id/skep1238>). *Glottolog 3.0*. Jena, Germany: Max Planck Institute for the Science of Human History.
2. Scholastic Book of Lists (2003)
3. Robertson 1989, p. 3.
4. Veness 1869.
5. Veness 1869, p. 85.
6. Bakker 2014, p. 197.
7. Van den Berg, Margot (6 July 2013). "Skepi Nederlands: Is dit geen moye taal?" (<http://stemmenvanafrika.nl/skepi-nederlands-is-dit-geen-moye-taal/>). Retrieved 2017-03-01.
8. Van der Wal, Marijke (17 December 2013). "Brief van de maand december 2013" (<http://www.hum.leidenuniv.nl/onderzoek/brieven-als-buit/over/brief-van-de-maand-december-2013.html>). Retrieved 2017-03-01.
9. Evenhuis, M. (1997) "Zeeuwse creooltalen sterven een stille dood (<http://people.zeelandnet.nl/evenhuis/belbel2.htm>)", *Provinciale Zeeuwse Courant*. 1 December.
10. Bakker 2014, pp. 217-218.

References

- Bakker, Peter (2014). "Three Dutch Creoles in Comparison". *Journal of Germanic Linguistics*. **26** (3): 191–222. doi:10.1017/S1470542714000063 (<https://doi.org/10.1017/S1470542714000063>).
- Robertson, Ian E. (1983). "The Dutch linguistic legacy and the Guyana/Venezuela border question". *Boletín de Estudios Latinoamericanos y del Caribe*. **34**: 75–97.

- Robertson, Ian E. (1989). "Berbice and Skepi Dutch: A Lexical Comparison" (http://www.dbnl.org/tekst/_tij003198901_01/_tij003198901_01_0002.php). *Tijdschrift voor Nederlandse Taal- en Letterkunde*. **105**: 3–21. Retrieved 1 March 2017.
 - Veness, William T. (1869). *Ten years of mission life in British Guiana. A memoir of the Rev. Thomas Youd* (<https://archive.org/details/tenyearsofmissio00vene>). London: Society for promoting Christian knowledge.
-

Retrieved from "https://en.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?title=Skepi_Creole_Dutch&oldid=963460717"

This page was last edited on 19 June 2020, at 22:51 (UTC).

Text is available under the [Creative Commons Attribution-ShareAlike License](#); additional terms may apply. By using this site, you agree to the [Terms of Use](#) and [Privacy Policy](#). Wikipedia® is a registered trademark of the [Wikimedia Foundation, Inc.](#), a non-profit organization.